

# EUROPEAN WAR CAUSES CHRISTMAS SANITY WAVE TO SWEEP COUNTRY

By JANE DIXON.

We are in the midst of what may be called a safe and sane Christmas.

Santa Claus up to date is a sensible sort of person who passes by the gewgaw counter without a bit of hesitation.

The reason for all this good sense on the part of Santa Claus is the war.

The war is not so much a reason as an excuse, sighed the wife whose delicate hints about diamond bracelets had fattened against a solid wall of hard times talk erected by her husband.

But he was a reason or an excuse, the fact remains that a sanity wave is sweeping the country this Yuletide.

We are to spare and be spared a vast number of perpetrations in the name of presents.

The girl behind the counter, and the man, too, says people are purchasing things useful rather than things ornamental.

Every shopper is a utilitarian. A dozen pairs of good little thread socks are a more popular gift than the habitual brass ash tray or the pink flannel napkin with the sterling silver monogrammed top.

"Utility first," is the Santa Claus slogan.

Yes, indeed. We have much to be thankful for.

Take the safety side of the situation for example.

A conservative estimate of the pin-cushions which have been wrapped in white tissue paper tied with holly ribbons and sent to make merry the Christmas of a girl without a whole pair of stockings to her name would place the number far in the billions.

These pin-cushions invariably bear in-

"Utility First" Is the Slogan of the Holiday Shopper, Says the Girl Behind the Bargains, Who Sees a New, Sensible Sort of Person in the 1915 Santa Claus

plain black tie. Then we'll be sunk for sure."

Last year it was noted about that a certain man wanted a dressing gown for Christmas. Three of the women of his family undertook to please him.

One sent a pale lavender apron piped in purple with a large purple monogram embroidered on the left sleeve. Another chose a buff with pink rosebuds scattered at random over the surface.

The third hit upon a cubist conception, this having the same general effect as an insane rainbow and guaranteed to give a sick headache. It was the kind of creation that would make a man believe he was seeing things if it happened to be hanging in his room the morning after the night before.

This victim of the three grievous gifts conceived a brilliant idea. He folded up the family contributions to comfort, wound them around with the twenty yards of red and green striped ribbon in which feminine fancy had entangled them and hid him off to a second hand clothes shop some distance away.

The keeper of the shop, after plenty of pressure, agreed he might allow \$3.45 for the outfit, and he was stretching himself a lot at that. His offer was accepted and the three forty-five was conveyed to a clothier and invested in a dark blue and tan garment, bearing a close resemblance to a horse blanket, but as comfortable as an old shoe.

Such absurdities could not happen this safe and sane Christmas. Women are wiser and pocketbooks are leaner. Wherefore the plain dark blues and tans are wont to be the first choice, thereby

mignonette, its graceful tabby cat with the glistering fur coat and the continual song.

"What would you like for Christmas, aunty," wrote a niece of the little old lady. "Name the thing you have wanted most and longest and Santa Claus will surely bring it to you."

The niece had long since migrated to the city and the pancy beds were only a summer memory. She wondered if

tion to sit in front of the fireplace.

In the very first return mail she found the answer. And what do you think was the fondest desire of aunty's heart? A pair of black silk tights!

"I've wanted a pair of black silk tights for ten years," wrote aunty, "but I never had the courage to buy them for myself here in Green Camp. What with so many folks needing flannels it

a heap nicer than this knit underwear. And I've read as how they are just as warm too."

Of course aunty will get her wish, for three pairs of the finest black silk tights money can buy are already on the way. The question is, what will the folks back in Green Camp, Ohio, think of aunty's Santa Claus?

Annapolis of Cupid, there is a decided tendency on the part of prospective fiancées to pop the question right now. This tendency is by no means new. It has merely gained an impetus hitherto unknown, which may or may not be attributed to the war.

The reason? Why, the lucky winner is able to combine a Christmas present and an engagement ring. What girl in love



Some recipients of the Rubaiyat.

aunty would want a nice warm shawl; a new black bonnet with a cut jet ornament, a cozy chair with an air cush-

seemed a wicked wish, but if Santa Claus brought them of course I would be bound to wear them. They must feel

would stop to think she has been hunched out of a perfectly good present? She is probably so pleased to wear the



His master's ties.

solitaire that she forgets Santa Claus and Cupid are two distinct and separate persons. When she flashes the sparkler in the envious eyes of the other girls they turn shamrock shade with envy and conceal the chip diamond bracelet on their left wrist as they do the hope in their heart that they too will wear the badge of individual ownership.

Almost any day, if you take the trouble to linger in front of the jeweller's window you will find lovely Agnes leaning on the strong arm of Davey David, the twain immersed in the relative merits of a solitaire for \$125 and a solitaire for \$150. Davey doesn't know it, but an imitation anything set in fake something would look to her like the

jewels of an Indian Prince when worn for ornamentation's sake.

"If you know so much about Christmas presents, why not give us a few suggestions?" you ask.

Exactly. My Yuletide messages of approval to the particular man in whom I happen to be interested consist of a travelling coat and an Airedale pup.

The coat was sent in the hope it might forever destroy all desire for trains and their environs. The Airedale pup was selected to guard a new automobile that threatens to materialize at any moment. If luck is with me both gifts will make good.

You cannot heat that for a safe and sane Christmas.

## KIT CLARKE RECALLS THE MINSTRELS OF OTHER DAYS

By KIT CLARKE.

IT is sad to think that the foremost writer of folk songs the world has known had but a hall room to call home when he was composing the beautiful songs that will keep his name alive as long as sweet melody exists.

Stephen Collins Foster died at Bellevue Hospital in New York on January 13, 1864, at the age of 33 years, and the matchless legacy of melody he bequeathed to the world embraces among nearly two hundred songs the following gems: "Oh, Susanna," "Open the Lattice, Love," "Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming," "Gentle Annie," "In the Ned," "My Old Kentucky Home," "Beautiful Dreamer," "Old Dog Tray," "Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground," "Willie, We Have Missed You," "Nellie Bly," "Old Black Joe," "Little Jenny Dear," "Johnny McDevall," his wife, and that touching and most beautiful of ballads, "The Old Folks at Home."

Foster told me he expected that "The Old Folks at Home" would surpass "Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground" in popularity and that he considered the latter written contrary to the laws of melody, and to him it was a marvel how it could ever have achieved success, especially as it was a stolen air. It may have been Foster's error in localizing his song, giving prominence to the Suwannee River, that somewhat affected its popularity at the moment, for he was both composer and poet and he wrote the words and music of all his songs, but that "The Old Folks" is a finer, sweeter, more melodious and touching composition admits of no doubt.

Nearly half a million copies were sold previous to 1862, one edition attributing the authorship to E. P. Christy of Christy's Minstrels, who paid Foster \$500 for the ephemeral honor. Foster's first song was "Oh, Susanna," and was written when he was 17 years of age and was sung in public in his native city of Pittsburgh by the Virginia Serenaders, the first negro minstrel troupe ever organized. The song made an instant hit and music publishers "fell over each other" to secure his compositions.

Negro minstrelsy was first presented to the public on February 6, 1843, and it was probably this troupe that Foster saw and that inspired him with a musical ambition.

In December, 1863, I went with Foster to his room, and while I was sitting at his side he finished that exquisite song "Hard Times Come Again No More," and then in a fine tenor voice he sang it for the first time with deep pathos. He accompanied himself upon the banjo, and as he finished this gem he handed the banjo to me, saying, "Keep it," and I have kept it ever since.

Walking on our streets to-day Foster would surely be considered a tramp, for his garments were always worn threadbare and an old felt hat was usually upon his head. Yet he could have dressed in all that was fashionable, since he always received large sums of cash for his compositions, but if he was paid a thousand dollars in the morning he would at once start on a search for his boon companion, George Cooper, a brilliant young poet of the time, and together the two would inaugurate a "celebration" that usually found them at Pfaff's, on Broadway above Bleecker street, in a state of glorious physical and financial ruin. And while Pfaff's was not decorated with tinsel to any alarming extent its creature comforts were fit for the kings who came there and lingered long. Among them were Oakley Hall, Joe Howard, Henry Clapp, George H. Brown, John Phinix, Stephen Piske, N. P. Willis, George Cooper and a score of others of the most brilliant men of the day.

It was here that Joe Howard invented that famous proclamation calling for 100,000 volunteers for the army, to which he playfully attached the name of President Lincoln, and which

resulted in Howard's incarceration in Port Lafayette.

"The Old Folks at Home," "Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground," "Old Black Joe" and "My Old Kentucky Home" were almost equally popular, are now esteemed classics and brought Foster nearly \$100,000 in royalties, yet he was always "that broke," and usually in a deuce state of penury.

It is a curious fact that there was actually no love for liquor in his nature; indeed, he despised it, but he fell a victim in order to assuage his great grief he felt at the loss of his mother. No man ever lived who loved a parent more deeply; he adored her; she was all to him, his angel, his idol, and he worshipped her memory. I have often seen his eyes fill with tears as he held his thoughts and heard sighs as if his heart was being torn asunder, and to find relief from this distress he sought the bottle.

Among the friends of Foster was Daniel Decatur Emmet, one of the founders of negro minstrelsy, who was

then appearing with Bryant's Minstrels at Mechanics Hall, 472 Broadway. It was while here that Emmet composed "Dixie," which made a big hit and has been extremely popular ever since. Emmet sold a copy to Newcomb, a member of Buckley's Serenaders, and this copy was used by a New Orleans publisher in printing an edition under the title of "Dixie's Land," attributing the authorship to Mr. Peters. I have in my own books the names of twenty-seven different people all of whom claimed to have written "Dixie" and even now a new author jumps into the ring occasionally.

A dozen publishers had issued the song when Firth, Pond & Co. of New York, to whom alone Emmet had sold the right of publication, called a hall along the entire line. Shortly afterwards a convention of music publishers was held at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. Here the subject of "Dixie" was introduced and warmly argued when Emmet personally appeared and so thoroughly satisfied all that he, and he alone, was

the author of "Dixie" that all present agreed to discontinue its publication and send the plates to Firth, Pond & Co. This they did, but Emmet said that every one had printed enough copies to meet the demand for five years before returning the plates.

Emmet lived to reach the age of 85 years, passing away at Mount Vernon, Ohio, a few years ago.

Touring the country with a minstrel show often enriches one's ears with music of a different nature, and in the South some thirty years ago the music of the serenade was a rather familiar sound. In 1892 I was manager of Henry's Minstrels and devoted four weeks to the then wild and extremely woolly State of Texas. At San Antonio I met my old friend Henry Ward Beecher, who was on a lecturing tour, and at the hotel Mr. Beecher, his manager, Jim Pond and myself occupied seats at the same table during meals and debated our prospects for the evening.

My show held forth at the opera house, while Mr. Beecher delivered his

address at the hall around the corner. About 9 o'clock I ran around to the hall and was amazed to find less than 200 people in attendance, while I had turned away hundreds in spite of the fact that I had lifted the price of seats to \$2 each. After the performance we sat at luncheon, when Mr. Beecher turned to me and said:

"Charles, I think like your show better than mine down here."

I pointed out if he felt like terminating his tour I might offer him a position as end man or perhaps that of intercomer. I laid before him the box office statement of my receipts, \$2,250, when he remarked:

"Just ten times more than mine."

After luncheon we started to inspect the signs and strolled into the Fashion, the swiftest among the wide open palaces of fortune, run by a sport named Harris.

We noted the operations of the artistic swindling game of roulette, were more interested in the extremely tough looking croupiers at the table where Spanish monte was dispensed and then came to a dining little scene of fare. Here I purchased a stack of blue chips for 50 cents to show Henry Ward how the nice old thing worked and possibly to show myself how quickly my little fifty would see or flow or something like that.

But it moved the other way this time and at the end of the deal I cashed in for \$150 and we left the place. In the door Mr. Harris, who had discovered the identity of his distinguished visitor, very politely wished us good night, adding the hope that we had found our visit pleasant and interesting. Fifteen minutes later he was murdered.

We visited the military plaza and set at ease of the covered outdoor road stands sampling Mexico's national dish, if that's what it might be called, called carne carné, consumed apparently of pepper, pepper and pepper, and indeed and truly it was appalling. A single infliction would make your mouth double up and twist like a spiral spring. Just then we heard the shriek of a pistol shot and as we turned the Fashion this minute later we saw Harris dead upon the floor, murdered by a Ben Thompson, from Austin, an instantaneously little murderer, but with a record of some two dozen not so upon his gun belt. A few days later Mr. Thompson held a court conference with a croupier and when the conference terminated Mr. Thompson's corpse was decorated with a varied assortment of buried air holes too numerous to mention.

Some weeks later we gave a performance at Mark Twain's old home, Hannibal, in old Missouri, and while I stood at the entrance taking tickets a nobleman undertook to walk by me in a rather "don't care a cuss" sort of manner.

"Tickets, please?" I suggested in my always polite and refined manner.

"That's my ticket," quietly replied the gentleman, and I reached for the ticket, but just as quick as I saw it I didn't want it for it was a sixth shooter. He was fumbling in a very sassy manner.

"That's good," I said, and he passed it.

Shortly afterward an unassuming little man came up to me and rather modestly inquired if I would extend the courtesy of free admission to the show.

"Yes," I answered, "of course," and then I related the incident of the revolver to him.

"Where's the man?" he asked. I pointed him out and the Sheriff exclaimed "What, him?" and in about two seconds the aforementioned sixth shooter with its own flew past me in a streak, bound for the boulevard with the fine right list of the Sheriff securely attached to the back of the gunman's neck, and when the list let go Mr. Man was in the mud in the middle of the muddest street you ever saw.

In those days the mud of the streets of Hannibal was famous for its richness and depth and adhesive qualities.



Killing two love birds with one stone.

disputable evidence that the maker was in a hurry to finish the other seventeen he had determined to distribute. They are usually hand embroidered in daisies, because daisies are easy to do. The initial in the centre is humpy and bears a slight resemblance to any letter in the alphabet, so you cannot possibly be mistaken in its identity. The pink ribbon strung through the edges and tied in showy bows is as hectic as a bashful boy's first blush. Of course your room is cross yellow, which makes the disposal of the cushion more intricate.

The fate of that pin-cushion is fixed. It is packed away in a drawer along with the other six you drew this Christmas, and the comedy collection accrued from Christmas gone by. If you have the heart you may pass it along next year to an out of town friend who gets rid of it by sending it to the local church fair where it is rescued by a charitable daughter parishioner and given to the daughter of the washerwoman as a wedding present.

It is a somewhat shopworn fact that Roman is safe from the necktie scourge at Christmas time. For weeks the screams of these scarfs have been heard issuing from haberdashers' and men's wear departments. A woman's idea of a necktie is something with only slightly less candle power than the light of an Erie engine. "A favorite color scheme for the feminine shopper is an orange background plentifully encrusted with purple pine little daisies of scarlet by way of highlights."

The girl behind the big blaze in Christmas stockings is well aware of woman's weakness for the weird. From a special shelf he extracts the flippers of four seasons. He twists a purple skirt around with bright green roses and a little novelty lately introduced by John Drew. The way they fall for the John Drew chatter is pitiful. Some have kissed and father with quite a head and head worn shiny from the under the desk lamp late at night, he is needed to suffer in silence.

It is never explained that the fellows at the end of the never cease to annoy him and he would be caught with a

what has struck the "daisy" and "daisy" complained one dis-

counted and counted on unloading

the book for the holidays,

and he had been smirched down to

saving a heap of trials and tribulations for mere men.

The story is told of a woman with a great deal more money than mind and her selection of Santa Claus favors.

This daughter of gold is busy twenty-four hours out of the day chasing happiness, though 'tis said she seldom catches up with it. Her idea of a Christmas gift is something that costs \$5. Never mind what the something is so long as it represents a V.

Several years ago she was particularly rushed at the holiday season, so she gave less thought than usual to the disposal of the Christmas fives. She was passing a book shop when a limpleather and gold copy of "Omar Khayyam" caught her eyes. Here was an inspiration. She would buy five dollars worth of Oriental philosophy for a friend who lived in a hall bedroom and hadn't a second shirtwaist to her name.

Upon investigation Omar looked so good she decided to mass her Christmas suggestions and spend the hundred dollars in fives she set aside for gift purposes on Khayyam and his kidding. One copy went to a widowed friend of her girlhood who lived on a farm up in Maine and went to the little crossroads church twice on Sunday for diversion.

Another was mailed to a seamstress with three young robin mouths to feed and a net income of \$12 a week. The elevator man in the apartment house where the magnificent giver lived drew one of the limpleathers. The remainder of the recipients were more or less appropriately selected.

Picture, if you will, the widow on the farm perusing the wine, women and song philosophy of the Orient. Imagine the elevator man in the depths of his cane poring over "a loaf of bread, a just of wine, and thou—." This year the hundred dollars would have gone for volumes of "Moonmadness," a sort of Egyptian and Parisian nightmare, had not a safe and sane salesman persuaded the donor to select boxes of writing paper in graduated sizes. This is at least useful, and who knows but another Yuletide will find the woman sending hand-picked presents to her small army of the needy.

Away out in the most rural district of Ohio lives a little old lady of exquisite features and a heart of gold. Love came to her long ago, but he was a fleeting visitor and left before truth time. Since then the little old lady has dwelt alone in the cottage with its sweet lavender atmosphere, its raisin cookies for the children, its beds of panics and

## RECKLESS QUOTATIONS

By Sara Moore



"We are puzzled to select a school for our girls. Somehow convent training no longer prepares a girl for the demands of society"—overheard at the dansant.